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APPOINTMENT AS MEMBERS TO COMMISSION ON WARTIME CONTRACTING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 841(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces a joint appointment by the Speaker and the majority leader of the Senate and an appointment by the Speaker on the part of the House to the Commission on Wartime Contracting:

Joint appointment:

Mr. Michael J. Thibault, Reston, Virginia, Co-Chairman

Speaker's appointment:

Mr. Clark Kent Ervin, Washington, DC.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

LEARN HOW TO SPEAK DEMOCRAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, in the interest of legislative process whereby we hear many speeches on the floor, many Members talk to their constituents, I am going to try to bring a bit of enlightenment to this process with the use of a technological device known as a ruler and charts.

We are going to learn how to speak Democrat today, speaking local Democrat.

Often we heard the word "progressive," which translates into "regressive." As used in a sentence, "Democrats are progressive." The translation, "Democrats are regressive."

We hear the word "change," which means "the 1970s." "Democrats will bring you change." Translation, "Democrats will bring you the 1970s."

"Government" means "socialism." "Democrats support proactive government." Translation, "Democrats support proactive socialism."

"Enhance revenues" translates into "raise taxes." "Democrats will enhance revenues." Translation, "Democrats will raise taxes."

This is my favorite part. "The rich means you." For example, "Democrats will only tax the rich." Translation, "Democrats will only tax you." Ouch.

"Invest" translates into "waste." Again, used in a sentence, "Democrats will invest your money." Translation, "Democrats will waste your money."

"Energy" means "lethargy." "Democrats have an energy policy." Translation, "Democrats have a lethargy policy."

"Green-collar jobs" translates into "unemployment." "Democrats will replace your blue-collar jobs with green-collar jobs" translates into "Democrats will replace your blue-collar jobs with unemployment."

Speaking global Democrat. "Diplomacy" equals "magic." "Democrats will protect America from Iranian nukes through tough principled diplomacy" translates into "Democrats will protect America from Iranian nukes through tough principled magic."

"Engaged" means "appease." "Democrats will engage America's enemies." Translation, "Democrats will appease America's enemies."

Importantly, "end" means "lose." "Democrats will end the Iraq war." Translation, "Democrats will lose the Iraq war."

Finally, contextually construing electoral Democrat, i.e., walking the party plank. This is a graduate-level course.

"As a progressive party, Democrats will bring you change by using government to enhance revenues from the rich to invest in the production of energy and green-collar jobs and by using diplomacy to engage America's enemies and end the Iraq war."

The translation, "As a regressive party, Democrats will bring you the 1970s by using socialism to raise taxes from you to waste in the production of lethargy and unemployment, and by using magic to appease America's enemies and lose the Iraq war."

I hope this exercise has been instructive.

OBSESSION WITH IRAQ HURTS AMERICAN SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, for over 5 years, the administration has had a single-minded obsession with the occupation of Iraq. It has poured our troops and our treasure into a misguided foreign adventure, while ignoring our Nation's real security needs, both at home and abroad.

I want to mention just a few of the ways that Iraq tunnel vision has blinded us to what we really need to be focusing on. First, the occupation of Iraq has weakened our efforts in Afghanistan. Secretary of Defense Gates has acknowledged that many Europeans do not support the NATO mission in Afghanistan because they oppose the American occupation of Iraq.

He has said, and I quote "Many (Europeans) have a problem with our involvement in Iraq and project that to Afghanistan."

Second, the Commission on the National Guard and Reserves have said that the use of the Guard and Reserves in Iraq has seriously weakened their ability to protect us from threats to the homeland. These threats could include terrorist attacks using chemicals, biological and nuclear weapons.

Third, just as our Guard and Reserves have been stretched too thin, our entire military has been stretched to the breaking point. Many of our most senior military leaders have been warning us for quite some time now that the occupation of Iraq has compromised our ability to respond to genuine threats elsewhere in the world.

Fourth, our occupation of Iraq has strengthened the hand of the pro-nuclear regime in Iran. The occupation has destabilized the region, giving Iran the chance to gain influence among its neighbors.

We must stand with our international partners, and we must work with international organizations to put strong diplomatic pressures on Iran to behave responsibly. We must begin direct negotiations with Iran. We cannot allow the occupation of Iraq to spread to a war with Iran. That would be another catastrophic mistake.

Iran would retaliate against our troops in Iraq and against our allies and interests throughout the region. Oil would spike, further threatening our economy right here at home.

Fifth, the occupation of Iraq has seriously undermined America's standing in the world. My colleague on the Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman DELAHUNT of the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight, issued a report on this subject just last week, a report that I hope every Member of the House will read.

The report describes the alarming decline in how the people of the world view the United States. There has been a 45-percent drop in America's favorability rating in Indonesia, a 41 percent drop in Morocco and a 40 percent drop in Turkey.

The United States is now viewed unfavorably by 82 percent of the people in Arab countries, and there has been a 26-point increase in Europe for the view that U.S. leadership in world affairs is undesirable. The report finds that two of major causes for this unprecedented and widespread decline are the occupation of Iraq and the torture and abuse of prisoners.

In addition, the people of the world believe that America's decisions are made unilaterally without regard to international law or standards, making our rhetoric about democracy quite hypocritical.

The administration has told us that the occupation of Iraq is all about spreading democracy in the Middle East. Yet, here we have clear evidence that their policy is failing, because you cannot bomb and blast your way to democracy.

There can be no doubt that the occupation of Iraq has weakened America's